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THE MASTER OF THE "PIFFLE"

WALKER, STREET & DOOLITTLE
NEW YORK

THE MASTER OF THE "PIFFLE"

A PSYCHOLOGICAL PHANTASMAGORIA
IN FIVE SCREAMS AND A KICK.

INCLUDING AN ANCIENT AZTEC
FORMULA FOR SCIENTIFIC TREAT-
MENT OF INTERNAL TROUBLES.

By LIND C. DOYLE, Jr.

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To the Memory

of

Hon. STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS

A Senator from Illinois

"Whenever you recognize the right of a President to say to a member of Congress, 'Vote as I tell you or I will bring a power to bear against you at home which will crush you' you destroy the independence of the representative and convert him into a tool of the Executive power. I resisted this invasion of the Constitutional rights of a Senator, and I intend to resist it as long as I have a voice to speak or a vote to give".

(Speech at Alton, Oct., 15, 1858)

ASPIRATION.

"His gentle spirit rolls, in the melody of souls
"Which is pretty, but I don't know what it means."

APOLOGY.

"When 'Omer smote 'is bloomin Lyre
"'E'd 'eard men sing by land and sea
"And wot 'E thought 'E might require
"'E went an' took—the same as me.

(Kipling.)

CONTENTS

SCREAM I—Diplomatic Ideals
By The Beaver

SCREAM II—Psychological Democracy
By The Bellman

SCREAM III—Peons and Pills
By The Bellman

SCREAM IV—Boojums and Sneers
By The Bellman

SCREAM V—The New Freedom
By The Bellman

A KICK—Addressed to the American Citizen
By The Author

PREFACE.

The author cannot escape an acknowledgment of his debt to the late Lewis Carroll for much of the machinery and symbolism of this work. "The Master of the 'Piffle'" like "The Hunting of the Snark" is an attempt to provoke serious political thought under cover of "nonsense verse." Credit should also be given to a well known Talking Machine Company for the Musical Medley in Scream IV.

Some explanation of the Ancient Aztec Formula may be desired. In spite of the Bellman's confident assertion of its simplicity, the lay reader will find it better to "accept it in principle" and ignore trivial details. The

principle demonstrated ($a+b+c=o$) is sufficient.

The Formula itself should be read musically and diplomatically, passing over important points as lightly as possible.

The dash (—) should be read always "*minus*"—all temptations to the contrary notwithstanding.

It has been questioned whether, in the equation "$21=D-n$", the "21" should be emphasized (like the h in Hades) or silent (like the p in Psychology). Undoubtedly the best way is to read it over twice, emphasizing the "21 guns" (like Hades) the first time, and only enunciating the second term of the equation the second. In the same Scream the word "brandeised" should be pronounced in three syllables and with the long i.

The only originality claimed is the nebulous lucidity in which a semi-occult but Crystalline Psychology is draped.

Another word. The author stands sponsor for no unauthorized interpretations of this "pome." All such are at readers risk.

L. C. DOYLE, JR.

SCREAM I.

DIPLOMATIC IDEALS

The good "Piffle" lay in the bight of the
bay
With her colors afloat at her peak;
She was purely bedight, in dazzling white,
Adorned with a fine Yellow Streak.

On deck lay a Beaver who peacefully snoozed,
His head, fossilif'rous and fat,
Adorned with (the only adornment he used)
A richly embroidered Cocked Hat.

A tremulous torrent of words to the face
The slumbering Beaver awoke
And, promptly chatauquing (with ponderous grace),
In piffulous accents he spoke.

Diplomatic Ideals

"Come listen to me," said the Beaver, in glee,
"While I tell the infallible signs
That the Piffle is sailed by the Bellman and me
On loftiest statesmanlike lines.

We run her on Rhomboids, we run her on Reefs,
On Romance and Rhetoric rare,
We run her by meeting political griefs
With figments of frozen Hot Air.

Whenever the Bellman performs on his
bell
Or issues commands to the crew,
The Lobsters emit an admiring yell
Of 'Isn't that perfectly true.'

The Royal device which our owner has
planned
And considers remarkably fit
Is 'Dirigo,' meaning, as I understand,
In popular phrase, 'I am It.'

But the power which casts such a wonderful spell
And shows his remarkable worth
Is the ease of his pose while he's ringing his bell
In every language on earth.

To establish his power of standing alone
He makes his linguistics complete
By using a language entirely unknown
But which sounds irresistibly sweet.

When weather is thick, he's simply a brick
And the crew are convinced all is well
When he writes in the log, 'This ain't much of a fog'
And calmly performs on his bell.

His Convictions are real—made of Rubber and steel—
But elusive and spry like a frog
And he covers their gist with a luminous mist
Like a biograph shown in a fog.

Diplomatic Ideals

His lofty Ideals are frequently backed
By a change in political Creeds
And a modification of statements of fact
To suit Argumentative needs.

His diplomacy frail, wears a nebulous veil,
Being sinuous, wavy and neat.
So it easily takes in a Tenpenny Nail
And turns out a Corkscrew complete.

And next you should know of his 'Diet of
Crow' "

(Here the Beaver broke off with a sob)

"He handed a Hat to an Eminent foe

And gave him a Cabinet Job.

In diplomacy, industry, finance, or war

He can thread the most intricate maze,

Each threatening crisis he calmly will
floor

By a highly felicitous phrase.

While quite without flaw, in respect for
the law,
Constitutions are wax in his hands,
Though he knows that of course he's
bound to enforce
Constitutions in neighboring lands.

In Foreign Relations his method is sound,
It convinces, delights and allures;
It is simply to send his chief officer 'round
On lucrative lecturing tours.

I'm sorry to notice it's growing so late,
For I've an appointment to treat
For Riparian Rights on Occasions of State
With a trader who lives up the street.

I know that the Monster of Money will jeer,
But it's awfully hard" (here a sigh)
"To live on a meagre twelve thousand a year,
With living so horribly high."

SCREAM II.

PSYCHOLOGICAL DEMOCRACY

"He may come with a Toga or come with a
Mace

He may come with a grouch or a grin,

With snowy lace curtains adorning his
face

Or a lambrequin under his chin.

But if there's a character which I detest
(I'm perfectly willing to own)
It is that pestilential pestiferous pest
From Missouri, who 'wants to be shown.'

A crew that was anxious to live at its ease
Or was made of the genuine stuff,
Would give a submissive and synchronous sneeze
Whenever its Bellman took snuff.

Psychological Democracy

The function of followers is to be led
And hence it is no one's concern
If I choose to go backward at "full speed ahead"
Or forward at "full speed astern."

If I happen to spread all the canvass below
And stow all the cargo aloft
It's sufficient to murmur "He surely must know"
And you cannot repeat it too oft.

There's a high moral maxim that's true if not trite
And can be controverted by none. It
Is not "He has done it because it is right"
But "Its right just because he has done it."

This talk of adjourning I'm sorry to learn,
It approaches insurgency's border.
The one proper time for a crew to adjourn
Is just when I give it the order.

Psychological Democracy

I feel that my crew is sturdy and true
When leisure's allowed for reflection
And only just now has it started a row
(To the best of my own recollection).

'Twill quickly discover the meat in the egg
When I flourish my whip o'er its head
Oh, its lovely to see it just sit up and beg
Or calmly lie down and play dead.

The Master of the "Piffle"

Vox Populi (so it has often been said)
Is exactly the same as Vox Dei
But for practical purposes (don't be misled)
A far safer reading is Mei.

I know the conspiracy up in New York
At your peril you aid or abet it,
For whenever it comes to dispensing of Pork
Vox Populi's mine. Don't forget it.

This Merchant's Conspiracy is, I'm afraid,
Deep-rooted. For what do I see?
A failure for forty-four million is made
Expressly to irritate me.

They may gloom, glower, glimmer with glances morose
Or squeal till it echoes and thrills,
I'm simply determined to give 'em a dose
Of my Patent Political Pills.

When Psychology gives them a pain in
their necks

And insolvents are praying for fires,

They've only to get psychological checks

From pure psychological buyers.

A Fact'ry, ignoring all "mights, woulds or
coulds,"

When it stands on Insolvency's borders,

Should busily make psychological goods

On fine psychological orders.

Psychological Democracy

When psychology's turning his black
locks to gray
And cares thro' his harried head hurtle,
The workman on gay psychological pay
Will eat psychological turtle.

With cheerful psychology raising their
rates
The Roads, gaily waving their flippers,
Will gleefully haul psychological freights
From glad psychological shippers.

As a fruit of this pure psychological trance
Hens will lay psychological Eggs,
Hypothetical Hebrews will make misty pants
For pure psychological legs.

To the Purpose of Providence always I'm priv-
Y and (showing I'm fitted to lead 'em)
A Boom to the Big Business Interests I'll give
In My New Constitution of Freedom.

But one final fact I wish to relate,
(Though you may consider it funny),
The most psychological Servant of State
Won't take psychological money.

And then I have fears (here he melted in tears)
I've even a horrible hunch
That the Boojum is free, and preparing for me
No mere psychological punch.

FORMULA.

Assume $b = \frac{b}{a}$ *and* $a = \frac{a}{b}$

$\therefore b = c$ IF $x - y = z$

Transpose $x - z = y$

$\therefore$ (IF $x = 1$) $p = q$

and $\sqrt{x} = n$

Restate IF $c - x = z$ *and* $w^3 = u$

? $(ab+c)$ pdq.

Unstate IF $\frac{a - b}{c} = px + 1$

? $21 = D - n$

Mistate IF $\tan(\Phi - c) < \cos(y)$

gt (π).

Conclusion $A + B + C = O$

SCREAM III.

PEONS AND PILLS

"You may rouse me with metaphors, maggots and mice

Or with quirks, quibbles, quillets and quills

But surely there's nothing so thoroughly nice

As a Passion for Peons and Pills.

The Master of the "Piffle"

I never was born, to Mentally Mourn
O'er mere Psychological griefs
But in agony deep, I incessantly weep
When I think of the Mexican fiefs.

A Remedy which many years I have kept
Would cure all these Mexican ills
If the petulant peons would only accept
My Patent Political Pills.

Peons and Pills

You may take them in tariffs or take them
in tolls
For National fevers or chills
Since germs of decadence are murdered in
shoals
By these Patent Political Pills.

I make them of Maxims transcendently
wise
I mix them in Mist (slightly wet)
Then add some Ideals (with capital I's
And the very best Deals I can get.)

A flavor of Dreams, such as poets have hymned
A measure of Conscience (Refined)
And a trace of Ambition, tenaciously trimmed,
With a passion for Serving Mankind.

This recipe's only intended for minds
Of a high intellectual sort,
But I've made out (for people of Commoner kinds)
A Formula simple and short.

See note at end of Scream.

No mere lack of culture unfits you to
tread
The maze of this sweet syllogism
Its Perfectly Plain if you stand on your
Head
And look at the thing through a prism.

And surgeons have said that when care-
fully read
This Cryptic and Crystalline Thesis
Brings Bats to the Belfry or Wheels to
the Head
And produces Perceptive Paresis.

For $b=\frac{b}{a}$ it is plain

And $a=\frac{a}{b}$

Then $b=c$, (a remarkable gain)

When $x-y=z$.

Transposing it $x-z=y$

And, (if x equal unity,) then

If $p=q$ it is evident why

$\sqrt{x}=n$

Restating: If $c=x-z$

And $w^3=u$

The point is how shall u determine the value

Of $(ab+c)$ pdq.

Unstating if $\frac{a-b}{c}$

$=px+unity$ then

(So the formula runs) Are 21 guns

Worth a Tin Merchant's $D-n$?

Mis-stating: If tan (Φ—e)

<Cos. (y)

You can easily see that Grapejuice and Tea

Are the best Coefficients for Pie.

This Formula—(work of the labor of years)

May show, (as I grieve to admit)

As a final result—(here he burst into tears)

That A B & C = nit

I play it in Persian, I paint it in Pink
I solve it in Swedish and Spanish;
In Aztec, which one would assuredly think
Would cause apprehension to vanish.

But the moral effect on Niagara Park
Might be (and it troubles me much)
That the Bandersnatch could'nt get hold of the Snark
Which would certainly put it in Dutch.

I hold the Snark guilty of arson and rape
I chafe him with anxious alarms
I tempt him with Truces and tie him with Tape
While sending the Bandersnatch arms.

(My idea of an Armistice, let me remark
Is a vision of beauty and grace,
Its simply to muzzle the jaws of the Snark
While the Bandersnatch scratches his face).

I am not so deeply in ignorance sunk
As to think that a horrid Deceiver
Like a Snark, can compete when he's thoroughly drunk
With a sober intelligent Beaver.

He'll fan him with figments factitiously spun
Of fictions and foibles and frills
He'll offer him doses of 16 to 1
And my Patent Political Pills.

'Tis hard to sit silent and Watchfully
Wait
But I grudge not the labor or tears
For it shows to the World, Who's inher-
ently great
(A thing I've suspected for years)

Then seemed to be borne by a northerly
gale
As the mainsail filled out with a flap
A whisper which made the poor Bellman
turn pale
"The Beaver is pushed off the map"—

"I cannot believe it," he shrieked in affright
'Twould blast the Ideals of years,
Its only some hideous vision of night
Compounded of grape juice and sneers."

Like the nightmare (which gives me a horrible pain
And makes me unable to flee)
That the Boojum is back from the Wedding in Spain
To dispense what is coming to me.

NOTE.—The expression "$b = \frac{b''}{a}$ should be read "b equals b over a" and $\sqrt{x} = n$, "the square root of x equals n".

Tan $(\Phi - c)$ and Cos (y) are "tangent of Phi minus c" and "Cosine of y", respectively.

The sign $<$ reads "is less than".

SCREAM IV.

BOOJUMS AND SNEERS

You may rouse me with Grapejuice or
rouse me with squills,

May move me to laughter or tears;

I'll still have a passion for peons and pills

And horror of Boojums and Sneers.

My Personal mien, toward 1916
Is modest, receptive and free.
If the Boojum should fling his Hat in the ring
Who knows what would happen to me?

Whenever I see a Dentiferous Grin
With a bellicose beam in its eye
My current of courage grows thready and thin
And I feel unaccountably shy.

The Master of the "Piffle"

From visions of night I wake in affright
As the Boojum outgrabes on the heath
And moonbeams which shine with a silvery light
Refract from his Eminent Teeth

Last evening I woke with a horrified shout
"Oh Boojum why haste ye to roam
In searching for dubious Rivers of Doubt
When I've perfect Oceans at home."

Whenever he makes his Triumphant Re-
turns
From junketings over the sea
The heart in my bosom indignantly burns
At the Personal Insult to Me.

When I hear the Earth shake to his pon-
derous tread
Or his Smile gleams athwart of my
hawse
My tongue stands erect on the top of my
head
And my Similes stick to my jaws.

The Master of the "Piffle"

If ever I sit up especially late
  Or am feeling remarkably blue,
I seem to remember the Baker's sad fate
  And his horrible shriek:—"Its a Boo—"

I bathe him in bathos, I bait him with bread
  I treat him with treacle and toffee;
But I *cannot* escape a delirious dread
  That he may take a Third Cup of Coffee.

He fills me with woes though he certainly
knows
That purest pneumatics I preach
From the time of the Prince known as
Louis the Quince
To Louis the brandeised Peach.

But I keep my bell ringing whatever be-
tides
In mellifluous figures of speech
Like a disc that has music on both of its
sides
And a different record on each.

Its natural charm and perfection of tone
(In which all admit it excels)
Has the stately sonority of the Trombone
And the clearness of Orchestra Bells.

Now, the trill of the Piccolo, birdlike and thin
Or the tremulous sound of the lute
And again blending sweetly the vague violin
With the low dulcet voice of the flute

'Tis only one Bell and one Bellman and yet
We range in our neophyte knell
From the pure golden tone of the cheerful Cornet
To the Orchestra's marvellous swell.

Yet, (isn't it hard?) he plays in my yard
Without the least thought of apology
And I hear him insist that his ponderous fist
Will knock the "sigh" out of Psychology.

When I'm seeking Specifics both simple
and sure
For woes which our finances fetter
And doubt whether Metaphor, mingled or
pure
Or strong striking Similes better.

And the Monster of Money I'm ready to
bind
With my thoughts soaring high and
yet higher
And there comes on the wings of the
Whispering Wind
A word sounding something like Lyre.

I know that the Boojum (Ah, there is the rub)
While singing his popular song
Is electing some Dub to the Scriptural Club
Which he runs while he does not belong.

I envy the sailors who fight, bleed and die
For two hundred dollars a year,
For the bullet is easier far to defy
Than the subtle and sibilant sneer.

SCREAM V.

THE NEW FREEDOM

I quote them from Pindar, I quote them
from Paul

From Malthus, Ricardo and Mill

I move them with motives and metaphors
—all

Constructed with infinite skill.

But if ever Imperative Laws I demand

For Personal Reasons of State

Some insolent Senator's sure to arise

Insisting on useless debate.

I rouse them with Rhetoric, Ruffles and Rice

I move them to mirth and to sobs.

I offer them highly Judicious Advice

(Relating to Government Jobs).

But they talk about Commerce and Cabbage and Corn
Of Banking and Business and Pork,
Of Conspirators lorn, who Mentally Mourn
In the purlieus of lower New York.

What are sickness and health, unemployment or wealth
Prosperity, Profits or Freights
(And the Beaver replied, in an accent of pride
"They are mere Psychological States").

But the Bellman continued "This country of ours
Should really, I've frequently said,
Vest all of its diffr'ent co-ordinate powers
In an Able Responsible Head."

Then Congress, eschewing all Futile Debate
Would send Me a statement of fact
I'd adjourn it, and then it would watchfully Wait
Till I told it what laws to enact.

With infinite skill, a suitable bill
I'd promptly and carefully draw
And this I would send—without right to amend—
For speedy enactment in law.

I should write it in Sanskrit or write it in Dutch
(Both easily at my command)
Or in some other one of the languages such
As our Congressmen don't understand.

Should they venture to offer a captious complaint
That my meaning was quite out of reach
I'd soothe 'em with quillets, quixotic and quaint
In mellifluous figures of speech.

Undoubtedly then it would go to the Senate
Who, tactfully loath to offend
Would ask (with a moan) o'er the President's 'phone
If the President wished to amend.

If I didn't say "crush it"; They surely would rush it
And send it to me to be signed
And this, it is true, I should probably do
Unless I had altered my mind.

But should there be sound, constitutional ground
For doubt that the Courts could enforce,
The Judge would agree to refer it to me
And I'd cheerfully tell him of course.

This method is slow, and cumbrous I know
I could shorten, improve and Refine it
Should I quietly draw, the requisite law
And simply but formally sign it.

In its libellous, laxative, license—the Press
Is a menace to true liberty
And the cure (I am really obliged to confess)
Is to leave the whole business to me.

A courage I'll need, you will see at a
glance
Which never turns backward or halts,"
(And the Crab and the Crawfish came for-
ward to dance
A meticulous Mexican Waltz).

A "KICK".

TO THE AMERICAN CITIZEN.

'Tis said, at his worst, King Charley the First
Demanded but this of his nation:
No Christians or Jews should dissent from his views
And He should control legislation.

The Fathers who founded this nation of ours
(To prevent usurpations and treasons)
Established co-ordinate separate powers
For good, sound and permanent reasons.

"Old Man Knowall" 'tis clear, was buried
last year

And unless you'd be laid on the shelf

As a citizen gay of this great U. S. A.

Do some Unwaitful Watching, yourself.

HERE ENDETH THE FIRST INNING.

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